THE

Two Wealthy Farmers;

Or, the Hiſtory of

Mr. BRAGWELL.

PART II.

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THE

Two Wealthy Farmers, &c

PART II.

Bragwell. What do you want to make me believe that there are two ways of keeping the commandments.

Worthy. No! but there may be two ways of underſtanding them.

Bragwell. Well! I am not afraid to be put to the proof, I defy any man to ſay I do not keep at leaſt the four firſt that are on the left ſide of the altar piece.

Worthy. If you can prove that, I ſhall be more ready to believe you obſerve thoſe of the other table, for he who does his duty to God will be likely to do his duty to his neighbour alſo.

Bragwell. What! do you think that I ſerve two Gods? Do you think then that I make graven images, and worſhip ſtocks or ſtones? Do you take me for a Papiſt or an Idolator?

Worthy. Don't triumph quite ſo ſoon maſter Bragwell. Pray is there nothing in the world you prefer to GOD, and thus make an idol of? Do you not love your money or your lands, or your crops, or your cattle, or your own will, and your own way rather better than you love GOD? Do you never think of theſe with more pleaſure than you think of Him, and follow them more eagerly than your religious duty?

Bragwell. O there's nothing about that in the 20th chapter of Exodus.

Worthy. But Jeſus Chriſt has ſaid, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Now it is certainly a man's duty to love his father and mother, nay, it would be wicked not to love them, and yet we muſt not love even theſe more than our Creator and our Saviour. Well, I think on this principle, your heart pleads guilty to the breach of the firſt and ſecond commandments, let us proceed to the third.

Bragwell. This is about ſwearing, is it not!

Mr. Worthy, who had obſerved Bragwell guilty of much profaneneſs in uſing the name of his maker, (though all ſuch offenſive words have been avoided in writing this hiſtory) now told him that he had been waiting the whole day for an opportunity to reprove him, for his frequent breach of the third commandment.

Good L—d, I break the third commandment; ſaid Bragwell, no indeed hardly ever. I once uſed to ſwear a little to be ſure, but I vow to G—d I never do it now except now and then, when I happen to be in a paſſion: and in ſuch a caſe, why good G—d, you know the ſin is with thoſe who provoke me and not with me, but upon my ſoul, I don't think I have ſworn an oath theſe three months; no not I faith as I hope to be ſaved.

Worthy. And yet you have broken this holy law no leſs than five or ſix times in the laſt ſpeech you have made.

Bragwell. Lord bleſs me. Sure you miſtake. Good heavens, Mr. Worthy, call G—d to witneſs I have neither cur

ſed nor ſwore ſince I have been in the houſe.

Worthy. Mr. Bragwell this is the way in which many who call themſelves very good ſort of people deceive themſelves. What is it no profanation of the name of God to uſe it lightly, irreverently and familiarly as you have done? Our Saviour has not only told us not to ſwear by the immediate name of God, but he has ſaid, ſwear not at all, neither by heaven nor by the earth, and in order to prevent our inventing any other irreligious exclamations or expreſſions, he has even added, but let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay, for whatſoever is more than this ſimple affirmation and denial cometh of evil.

Bragwell. Well, well, I muſt take a little more care I believe, I vow to heaven I did not know there had been ſo much harm in it, but my daughters ſeldom ſpeak without uſing ſome of theſe words, and yet they wanted to make me believe the other day that it was monſtrous vulgar to ſwear.

Worthy. Women, even gentlewomen, who ought to correct this evil habit in their fathers, and huſbands, and children, are too apt to encourage it by their own practice. And indeed they betray the profaneneſs of their own minds alſo by it, for none who truly venerate the holy name of God, can either profane it in this manner themſelves, or hear others do ſo without being exceedingly pained at it.

Bragwell Well, ſince you are ſo hard upon me I believe I muſt e'en give up this point—ſo let us paſs on to the next, and here I tread upon ſure ground, for as ſharp as you are upon me, you can't accuſe me of being a ſabbath-breaker, ſince I go to church every Sunday of my life unleſs on ſome very extraordinary occaſion.

Worthy. For thoſe occaſions the goſpel allows, by ſaying, "the ſabbath was made for man and not man for the ſabbath." Our own ſickneſs or attending on the ſickneſs of others are lawful impediments.

Bragwell. Yes, and I am now and then obliged to look at a drove of beaſts, or to go a journey, or to take ſome medicine, or perhaps ſome friend may call upno me, or it may be very cold, or very hot or very rainy.

Worthy. Poor excuſes Mr. Bragwell, I am afraid theſe will not paſs on the day of judgment. But how is the reſt of your Sunday ſpent?

Bragwell. O why I aſſure you, I often go to church in the afternoon alſo, and even if I am ever ſo ſleepy.

Worthy. And ſo you finiſh your nap at church I ſuppoſe?

Bragwell. Why as to that to be ſure we do contrive to have ſomething a little nicer than common for dinner on a Sunday; in conſequence of which one eats you know a little more than ordinary; and having nothing to do on that day, one has more leiſure to take a cheerful glaſs; and all theſe things will make one a little heavy you know.

Worthy. And don't you take a little ride in the morning, and look at your ſheep when the weather is good, and ſo fill your mind juſt before you go to church with the thoughts of them, and when you come away again don't you ſettle an account, or write a few letters of buſineſs?

Bragwell. I can't ſay but I do, but that is nothing to any body as long as I ſet a good example by keeping to my church.

Worthy. And how do you paſs your Sunday evenings?

Bragwell. My wife and daughters go a viſiting of a ſunday afternoon. My daughters are glad to get out at any rate, and as to my wife, ſhe ſays, that being ready dreſſed it is a pity to loſe the opportunity, beſides it ſaves her time on a week day; ſo then you ſee I have it all my own way, and when I have got rid of the ladies, who are ready to faint at the ſmell of tobacco, I can venture to ſmoak a pipe and drink a ſober glaſs of punch with half a dozen friends.

Worthy. Which punch being made of ſmuggled brandy, and drank on the Lord's day in very vain, as well as profane and worldly company, you are ena-

bled to break both the law of GOD and that of your country at a ſtroke : and I ſuppoſe when you get together, you ſpeak of your cattle or of your crops, after which perhaps you talk over a few of your neighbours faults, and then you brag a little of your own wealth or your own atchievments.

Bragwell. Why you ſeem to know us ſo well, that any one would think you had been ſitting behind the curtain, and yet you are a little miſtaken too, for I think we have hardly ſaid a word for ſeveral of our laſt Sundays on any thing but politics.

Worthy. And do you find that you improve your Chriſtian charity by that ſubject ?

Bragwell. Why to be ſure we do quarrel 'till we are very near fighting, that is the worſt on't.

Worthy. And then you call names and ſwear a little I ſuppoſe.

Bragwell. Why when one is contradicted and put in a paſſion you know fleſh and blood can't bear it.

Worthy. And when all your friends are gone home what becomes of the reſt of the evening ?

Bragwell. That is juſt as it happens, ſometimes I read the newſpaper; and as one is generally moſt tired on the days one does nothing, I go to-bed earlier than on other days, that I may be more fit to get up to my buſineſs the next morning.

Worthy. So you ſhorten Sunday as much as you can, by cutting off a bit at both ends I ſuppoſe, for I take it for granted you lie a little later in the morning?

Bragwell. Come, Come. We ſhan't get through the whole ten to-night if you ſtand ſnubbing one at this rate. You may paſs over the fifth, for my father and mother have been dead ſince I was a boy, ſo I am clear of that ſcrape.

Worthy. There are however many relative duties in that commandment; unkindneſs to all kindred is forbidden.

Bragwell. O if you mean my turning off my nephew Tom, the plowboy, you muſt not blame me for that, it was all my wife's fault. He was as good a lad as ever lived to be ſure, and my own brother's ſon, but my wife could not bear that a boy in a carter's frock ſhould be about the houſe who called her aunt. We quarrelled like dog and cat about it; and

when he was turned away we did not ſpeak for a week.

Worthy. Which was a freſh breach of the commandment, a worthy nephew turned out of doors, and a wife not ſpoken to for a week, are no very convincing proofs of your obſervance of the fifth commandment.

Bragwell. Well I long to come to the ſixth for you don't think I commit murder I hope.

Worthy. I am not ſure of that.

Bragwell. What kill any body.

Worthy. Why the laws of the land indeed and the diſgrace attending it are almoſt enough to keep any man from actual murder; let me aſk however, do you never give way to unjuſt anger, and paſſion, and revenge? as for inſtance, do you never feel your reſentment kindle againſt ſome of the politicians who contradict you on a Sunday night? and do you never puſh your animoſity againſt ſomebody that has affronted you, further than the occaſion will juſtify?

Bragwell. Harkee Mr. Worthy, I am a man of ſubſtance, and nobody, ſhall offend me without my being even with him. So as to injuring a man, if he affronts me

firſt there's nothing but good reaſon in that.

Worthy. Very well! only bear in mind that you wilfully break this commandment, whether you abuſe your ſervant, are angry at your wife, watch for a moment to revenge an injury on your neighbour, or even wreak your paſſion on a harmleſs beaſt; for you have then the ſeeds of murder working in your breaſt; and if there were no law, no gibbet to check you, and no fear of diſgrace neither, I am not ſure where you would ſtop.

Bragwell. Why Mr. Worthy you have a ſtrange way of explaining the commandments, ſo you ſet me down for a murderer merely becauſe I bear hatred to a man who has done me a hurt, and am glad to do him a like injury in my turn.—I am ſure I ſhould want ſpirit if I did not.

Worthy. I go by the ſcripture rule, which ſays, "he that hateth his brother is a murderer," and again "love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you." Beſides, Mr. Bragwell you made it a part of your boaſt that you ſaid the Lord's prayer every day,

wherein you pray to God to forgive you your treſpaſſes as you forgive them that treſpaſs againſt you.—If therefore you do not forgive them that treſpaſs againſt you, in that caſe, you pray daily that your own treſpaſſes may never be forgiven.

Bragwell. Well, come let us make haſte and get through theſe commandments. The next is, "thou ſhalt not commit adultry," thank God neither I nor my family can be ſaid to break the ſeventh commandment.

Worthy. Here again, remember how Chriſt himſelf hath ſaid, "whoſo looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath already committed adultry with her in his heart." Theſe are no far fetched expreſſions of mine, Mr. Bragwell, they are the words of Jeſus Chriſt. I hope you will not charge him with having carried things too far, for if you do, you charge him with being miſtaken in the religion he taught, and this can only be accounted for by ſuppoſing him an impoſtor.

Bragwell. Why upon my word, Mr. Worthy, I dont like theſe ſayings of his, which you quote upon me ſo often, and that is the truth of it, and I can't ſay I feel much diſpoſed to believe them.

Worthy. I hope you believe in Jeſus Chriſt. I hope you believe that creed of yours, which you alſo boaſted of your repeating ſo regularly.

Bragwell. Well, well, I'll believe any thing you ſay rather than ſtand quarrelling with you.

Worthy. I hope then you will allow, that ſince it is committing adultry to look at a woman with even an irregular thought, it follows from the ſame rule, that all immodeſt dreſs in your daughters, or indecent jeſts and double meanings in yourſelf, all looſe ſongs or novels, and all diverſions alſo which have a like dangerous tendency, are forbidden by the ſeventh commandment; for it is moſt plain from what Chriſt has ſaid, that it takes in not only the act but the inclination, the deſire, the indulged imagination, the act is only the laſt and higheſt degree of any ſin, the topmoſt round as if it were of a ladder, to which all the lower rounds are only as ſo many ſteps and ſtages.

Bragwell. Strict indeed, Mr. Worthy, but let us get on to the next, you wont pretend to ſay I *steal.* Mr. Bragwell I truſt was never known to rob on the high-way, to break open his neigh-

bour's houſe, or to uſe falſe weights or meaſures.

Worthy. No, nor have you ever been under any temptation to do it, and yet there are a thouſand ways of breaking the eighth commandment beſides actual ſtealing, for inſtance, do you never hide the faults of the goods you ſell, and heighten the faults of thoſe you buy? Do you never take advantage of an ignorant dealer, and aſk more for a thing than it is worth? Do you never turn the diſtreſſed circumſtances of a man who has ſomething to ſell, to your own unfair benefit, and thus act as unjuſtly by him as if you had ſtolen? Do you never cut off a ſhilling from a workman's wages under a pretence which your conſcience can't juſtify? Do you never paſs off an unſound horſe, for a ſound one? Do you never conceal the real rent of your eſtate from the overſeers, and thereby rob the poor rates of their legal due?

Bragwell. Pooh! theſe things are doing every day. I ſhan't go to ſet up for being better than my neighbours in theſe ſort of things, theſe little matters will paſs muſter.—I don't ſet up for a reformer.— If I am as good as the reſt of my

neighbours no man can call me to account; I'm not worſe I truſt, and I dont pretend to be better.

Worthy. You muſt be tried hereafter at the bar of God, and not by a jury of your fellow-creatures; and the ſcriptures are given us, in order to ſhew by what rule we ſhall be judged. How many or how few do as you do, is quite aſide from the queſtion; Jeſus Chriſt hath even told us to ſtrive to enter in at the *strait* gate, ſo that we ought rather to take fright, from our being like the common run of people, than to take comfort from our being ſo.

Bragwell. Come, I don't like all this cloſe work—it makes a man feel I don't know how—I don't find myſelf ſo happy as I did—I don't like this fiſhing in troubled waters—I'm as merry as a grig when I let theſe things alone—I'm glad we are got to the ninth. But I ſuppoſe I ſhall be lugged in there too head and ſhoulders. Any one who did not know me, would really think I was a great ſinner, by your way of putting things; I dont bear falſe witneſs however.

Worthy. You mean, I ſuppoſe, you would not ſwear away a man's life falſe.

ly before a magiſtrate, but do you take equal care not to ſlander or backbite him? Do you never repreſent a good action of a man you have quarrelled with, as if it were a bad one? or do you never make a bad one worſe than it is, by your manner of telling it? even when you invent no falſe circumſtance, do you never give ſuch a colour to thoſe you relate, as to leave a falſe impreſſion on the mind of the hearers? Do you never twiſt a ſtory ſo as to make it tell a little better for yourſelf, and a little worſe for your neighbour, than truth and juſtice warrant.

Bragwell. Why as to that matter, all this is only natural.

Worthy. Aye much too natural to be right I doubt. Well now we are got to the laſt of the commandments.

Bragwell. Yes, I have run the gauntlet finely through them all, you will bring me in guilty here I ſuppoſe, for the pleaſure of going through with it, for you condemn without judge or jury, maſter Worthy.

Worthy. The culprit I think has hitherto pleaded guilty to the evidence brought againſt him. The tenth commandment however, goes to to the root

and principle of evil, it dives to the bottom of things, this command checks the firſt riſing of ſin in the heart, teaches us to ſtrangle it in the birth as it were, before it breaks out in thoſe acts which are forbidden: as for inſtance, every man covets before he proceeds to ſteal, nay many covet who dare not ſteal leſt they ſhould ſuffer for it.

Bragwell. Why lookee, Mr. Worthy, I don't underſtand theſe new faſhioned explanations; one ſhould not have a grain of ſheer goodneſs left, if every thing one does is to be frittered away at this rate, I am not I own quite ſo good as I thought, but if what you ſay were true, I ſhould be ſo miſerable, I ſhould not know what to do with myſelf. Why, I tell you, all the world may be ſaid to break the commandments at this rate

Worthy. Very true, all the world, and I myſelf alſo, are but too apt to break them, if not in the letter at leaſt in the ſpirit of them. Why then all the world are (as the ſcripture expreſſes it) "guilty before God." and if guilty they ſhould own they are guilty, and not ſtand up and juſtify themſelves as you do, Mr. Bragwell.

Bragwell. Well according to my notion, I am a very honeſt man, and honeſty is the ſum and ſubſtance of all religion ſay I.

Worthy. All truth, honeſty, juſtice, order and obedience, grow out of the chriſtian religion. The true chriſtian acts, at all times and on all occaſions, from the pure and ſpiritual principle of love to God; on this principle, he is upright in his dealings, true to his word, kind to the poor, helpful to the oppreſſed. In ſhort, if he truly "loves God," he muſt "do juſtice," and *can't help*, loving mercy. Chriſtianity is an uniform conſiſtent thing. It does not allow us to make up for the breach of one part of GOD's law by our ſtrictneſs in obſerving another. There is no ſponge in one duty, that can wipe out the ſpot of another ſin.

Bragwell. Well, but at this rate, I ſhould be always pazzling and blundering, and would never know for certain whether I was right or not, whereas I am now quite ſatisfied with myſelf, and have no doubts to torment me.

Worthy. One way of knowing whether we really deſire to obey the whole law of God is this; when we find we have as great

a regard to that part of it, the breach of which does not touch our own intereſt as to that which does. For inſtance, a man robs me; I am in a violent paſſion with him, and when it is ſaid to me, "doeſt thou well to be angry?" I anſwer, "I do well." *Thou ſhalt not ſteal* is a law of God, and this fellow hath broken that law. Aye, but ſays conſcience, 'tis *thy own property* which is in queſtion.—He has broken *thy* hedge—he has ſtolen *thy* ſheep—he has taken *thy* purſe. Art thou therefore ſure whether it is his violation of thy property, or of GOD's law which provokes thee? I will put a ſecond caſe —I hear another ſwear moſt grievouſly: or I meet him coming drunk out of an alehouſe; or I find him ſinging a looſe prophane ſong. If I am not as much grieved for this blaſphemer, or this drunkard, as I was for the robber; if I do not take the ſame pains to bring him to a ſenſe of his ſins which I did to bring the robber to juſtice, "how dwelleth the love of GOD in me?" Is it not clear that I value my own ſheep more than God's commandments? That I prize my purſe more than I love my Maker? In ſhort, whenever I find out that I am more jea-

lous for my own property than for GOD's law; more careful about my own reputation than his honour, I always ſuſpect I am got upon a wrong ground, and that even my right notions are not proceeding from a right principle.

Bragwell. Why what in the world would you have me do?

Worthy. You muſt confeſs that your ſins *are* ſins. You muſt not merely call them ſins, while you ſee no guilt in them; but you muſt confeſs them ſo as to hate and deteſt them; ſo as to be habitually humbled under the ſenſe of them; ſo as to truſt for ſalvation not in your freedom from them, but in the mercy of a Saviour; and ſo as to make it the chief buſineſs of your life to contend againſt them, and in the main to forſake them. And remember that if you ſeek for a deceitful gaiety, rather than a well grounded cheerfulneſs, if you prefer a falſe ſecurity to final ſafety, and to go away to your cattle and your Farm, and diſmiſs the ſubject from your thoughts leſt it ſhould make you uneaſy; I am not ſure that this ſimple diſcourſe may not appear againſt you at the day of account, as a freſh proof that you

" loved darkneſs rather than light" and ſo increaſe your condemnation.

Mr. Bragwell was more affected than he cared to own. He went to-bed with leſs ſpirits and more humility than uſual. He did not however care to let Mr. Worthy ſee the impreſſion which it had made upon him; but at parting next morning, he ſhook him by the hand more cordially than uſual, and made him promiſe to return his viſit in a ſhort time.

Mr Bragwell when he returned home from his viſit to Mr. Worthy found that he was not quite ſo happy as he had formerly been. The diſcourſes of Mr. Worthy had broken in not a little upon his comfort. And he began to ſuſpect that he was not ſo completely in the right as his vanity had led him to believe. He ſeemed alſo to feel leſs ſatisfaction in the idle gentility of his own daughters, ſince he had been witneſs to the ſimplicity, modeſty, and uſefulneſs of thoſe of Mr. Worthy. And he could not help ſeeing that the vulgar violence of his wife did not produce ſo much family happineſs at home, as the humble piety and quiet di-

ligence of Mrs. Worthy produced in the houſe of his friend.

Happy would it have been for Mr, Bragwell, if he had followed up thoſe new convictions of his own mind, which would have led him to ſtruggle againſt the power of evil principles in himſelf, and to have controuled the force of evil habits in his family. But his convictions were juſt ſtrong enough to make him uneaſy under his errors, without driving him to reform them. The ſlight impreſſion ſoon wore off, and he fell back into his old practices. Still his eſteem for Mr. Worthy was not at all abated by the plain dealing of that honeſt friend. It is true he dreaded his piercing eye. He felt that his example held out a conſtant reproof to himſelf. Yet ſuch is the force of early affection and rooted reverence, that he longed to ſee him at his houſe. This deſire, indeed, as is commonly the caſe, was made up of mixed motives. He wiſhed for the pleaſure of his friend's company; he longed for that favorite triumph of a vulgar mind, an opportunity of ſhewing him his riches; and he thought it would raiſe his credit in the

world to have a man of Mr. Worthy's character at his houſe.

Mr. Bragwell, It is true, ſtill went on with the ſame eagerneſs in gaining money, and the ſame oſtentation in ſpending it. But though he was as covetous as ever, he was not quite ſo ſure that it was right to be ſo. At Chriſtmas, indeed, while he was actually engaged abroad in tranſactions with his dealers, he was not very ſcrupulous about the means by which he *got* his money; and while he was indulging in feſtivity with his friends at home, he was eaſy enough as to the manner in which he *ſpent* it. But a man can neither be making bargains nor making feaſts always; there muſt be ſome intervals between theſe two great objects for which worldly men may be ſaid to live; and in ſome of theſe intervals the moſt worldly, form perhaps ſome random plans of amendment. And though many a one may ſay in the fullneſs of enjoyment, "to-morrow ſhall be as this day, and more abundant;" yet hardly any man perhaps allows himſelf to ſay, even in his moſt ſecret moments, "I will *never* retire from buſineſs—I will *never* repent

—I will *never* think of death. Eternity ſhall *never* come into my thoughts." The moſt that ſuch a one probably ventures to ſay is, "I need not repent *yet*. I will continue ſuch a ſin a little longer, it will be time enough to think on the next world when I am no longer fit for the buſineſs or the pleaſures of this."

Such was the caſe with Bragwell. He ſet up in his own mind a general diſtant ſort of reſolution, that *some years hence*, when he ſhould be a *few years older*, and a *few* thouſands richer; when a few more of his *present ſchemes ſhould be compleated*, he would then think of altering his courſe of life. He would then certainly ſet about ſpending a religious old age; he would reform ſome practices in his dealings, or perhaps quit buſineſs entirely; he would think about reading good books, and when he had compleated ſuch and ſuch a purchaſe, he would even begin to give ſomething to the poor, but at preſent he really had little to ſpare for charity. The very reaſon why he ſhould have given more, was juſt the cauſe he aſſigned for not giving at all, namely, the *hardneſs of the times*. The true grand ſource

of charity, ſelf-denial, never came into his head. *Spend less* that you may *save more*, he would have thought a ſhrewd maxim enough. But *spend less* that you may *ſpare more*, never entered into his book of Proverbs.

At length the time came when Mr. Worthy had promiſed to return his viſit. It was indeed a little haſtened by notice that Mr. Bragwell would have in the courſe of the week, a piece of land to ſell by auction; and though Mr. Worthy believed the price was likely to be above his pocket, yet he knew it was an occaſion which would be likely to bring the the principle Farmers of that neighbourhood together, ſome of whom he wanted to meet. And it was on this occaſion that Mr. Bragwell prided himſelf, that he ſhould ſhew his neighbours ſo ſenſible a man as his dear friend Mr. Worthy.

Worthy arrived at his friend's houſe on the Saturday, time enough to ſee the houſe and garden and grounds of Mr. Bragwell by day-light. He ſaw with pleaſure for he had a warm and generous heart, thoſe evident ſigns of his friend's

roſperity, but as he was a man of a ſo-
er mind, and was a moſt exact dealer in
ruth, he never allowed his tongue the
icence of immodeſt commendation,
which he uſed to ſay either ſavoured of
lattery or envy. Indeed he never rated
nere worldly things ſo highly as to beſtow
pon them undue praiſe. His calm ap-
probation ſomewhat diſappointed the va-
nity of Mr. Bragwell, who could not
elp ſecretly ſuſpecting that his friend,
s good a man as he was, was not quite
ree from envy. He felt, however, very
much inclined to forgive this jealouſy,
which he feared the ſight of his ample
property, and handſome habitation, muſt
naturally awaken in the mind of a man
whoſe own poſſeſſions were ſo inferior.
He practiſed the uſual trick of ordinary
nd vulgar minds, that of pretending
himſelf to find fault with thoſe things
which were particularly deſerving praiſe,
when he found Worthy diſpoſed to paſs
hem over in ſilence.

When they came in to ſupper, he af-
ected to talk of the comforts of Mr.
Worthy's *little* parlour, by way of calling
his attention to his own large one. He

repeated the word *snug*, as applied to every thing at Mr. Worthy's, with the plain deſign to make compariſons favourable to his own more ample domains. He contrived, as he paſſed by to his chair, by a ſeeming accident, to puſh open the door of a large beaufet in the parlour in which all the finery was moſt oſtentatiouſly ſet out to view. He proteſted, with a look of ſatisfaction which belied his words, that for his part he did not care a farthing for all this trumpery; and then ſmiling and rubbing his hands, added with an air of no ſmall importance, "what a good thing it is, though for people of ſubſtance, that the tax on plate was taken off. You are a happy man, Mr. Worthy, you do not feel theſe things, tax or no tax it is all the ſame to you." He took care during this ſpeech, by a caſt of his eye, to direct Mr. Worthy's attention to a great profuſion of the brighteſt cups, ſalvers, and tankards, and other ſhining ornaments which crowded the beaufet. Mr. Worthy gravely anſwered, "Mr, Bragwell, it was indeed a tax which could not affect ſo plain a man as myſelf, but as it fell on a mere luxury, and therefore could not hurt the

poor, I was always ſorry that it could not be made productive enough to be continued. A man in my middling ſituation, who is contented with a good glaſs of beer, poured from a handſome earthen mug, the glaſs, the mug, and the beer, all of Engliſh manufacture, will be but little diſturbed at taxes on plate or on wine, but he will regret, as I do, that many old taxes are ſo much evaded, that new ones are continually brought on to make up the deficiencies of the former."

During ſupper the young ladies ſat in diſdainful ſilence, not deigning to beſtow the ſmalleſt civility on ſo plain a man as Mr. Worthy. They left the room with their Mamma as ſoon as poſſible, being impatient to get away to ridicule their father's friend.

The Dance; or, the *Chriſtmas merry-making.*

As ſoon as they were gone, Mr. Worthy aſked Bragwell how his family comforts ſtood, and how his daughters, who, he ſaid, were really fine young women, went on. "O, as to that," replied Brag-

well. " pretty much like other men's handſome daughters, I ſuppoſe, that is worſe and worſe. I really begin to apprehend that their fantaſtical notions have gained ſuch a head, that after all the money I have ſcraped together, I ſhall never get them well married. Betſey has juſt loſt as good an offer as any girl could deſire, young Wilſon, an honeſt ſubſtantial grazier as any in the county. He not only knows every thing proper for his ſtation, but is pleaſing in his behaviour, and a pretty ſcholar into the bargain; he reads hiſtory books and voyages of a winter's evening to his infirm father, inſtead of going to the card aſſembly in our town; neither likes drinking nor ſporting, and is a ſort of favourite with our parſon, becauſe he takes in the weekly numbers of a fine bible with Cuts, and ſubſcribes to the Sunday School, and makes a fuſs about helping the poor, theſe dear times as they call them, but I think they are good times for *us*, Mr. Worthy. Well, for all this, Betſy only deſpiſed him and laughed at him; but as he is both handſome and rich, I thought ſhe might come round at laſt. And ſo I invited him to come and ſtay a day or two

at Chriſtmas, when we have always a little ſort of merry-making here. But it would not do. He ſcorned to talk that palavering ſtuff which ſhe had been uſed to in the marble covered books I told you of. He told her indeed, that it would be the happineſs of his heart to live with her, which I own I thought was as much as could be expected of any man. But Miſs had no notion of marrying one who was only deſirous of living with her. No no, forſooth, her lover muſt declare himſelf ready to die for her, which honeſt Wilſon was not ſuch a fool as to offer to do. In the afternoon, however, he got a little into her favour by making a Rebus or two in the Lady's Diary, and ſhe condeſcended to ſay ſhe did not think Mr. Wilſon had been ſo good a ſcholar, but he ſoon ſpoilt all again. We had a bit of a hop in the evening. The young man though he had not much taſte for thoſe ſort of gambols, yet thought he could foot it a little in the old faſhioned way. So he aſked Betſey to be his partner. But when he aſked what dance they ſhould call, Miſs drew up her head, and in a ſtrange gibberiſh, ſaid ſhe ſhould dance nothing but a *Minuet de la Cour*,

and ordered him to call it; Wilſon ſtared, and honeſtly told her ſhe muſt call it herſelf, for he could neither ſpell nor pronounce ſuch outlandiſh words. I burſt out a laughing, and told him, I ſuppoſed it was ſomething like queſtions and commands, and if ſo, that was much merrier than dancing. Seeing her partner ſtanding ſtock ſtill, and not knowing how to get out of the ſcrape, the girl began by herſelf, and fell to ſwimming, and ſinking, and capering, and flouriſhing, and poſturing, for all the world juſt like the man on the ſlack rope at our fair. But ſeeing Wilſon ſtanding like a ſtuck pig, and we all laughing at her, ſhe reſolved to wreak her malice upon him; ſo with a look of rage and diſdain, ſhe adviſed him to go down country bumpkin, with the dairy maid, who would make a much fitter partner, as well as wife, for him than ſhe could. "I am quite of your mind, Miſs," ſaid he with more ſpirit than I thought was in him; "you may make a good partner for a dance, but you would make a ſad one to go through life with. I will take my leave of you, Miſs, with this ſhort ſtory. I had lately a pretty large concern in hay-jobbing, which

took me to London. I waited a good while in the Hay-market for my dealer, and to paſs the time I ſtepped into a ſort of ſinging play-houſe there, where I was grieved to the heart to ſee young women painted and dizened out, and capering away juſt as you have been doing. I thought it bad enough, and wondered the quality could be entertained with ſuch indecent mummery. But little did I think to meet with the ſame paint, finery, and tricks in a farm houſe. I will never marry a woman who deſpiſes me, nor the ſtation in which I ſhould place her, and ſo I take my leave. Poor girl! how ſhe *was* provoked! to be publickly refuſed and turned off, as it were, by a grazier! But it was of uſe to ſome of the other girls who have not held up their heads quite ſo high ſince, nor painted quite ſo red, but have condeſcended to ſpeak to their equals.

"But how I run on! I forget it is Saturday night, and that I ought to be paying my workmen, who are all waiting for me without."

Saturday Night; or, the *Workmen's Wages.*

As ſoon as Mr. Bragwell had done paying his men, Mr. Worthy ſaid to him, "I have made it a habit, and I hope not an unprofitable one, of trying to turn to ſome moral uſe, not only all the events of daily life, but all the employments of it too. And though it occurs ſo often, I hardly know one that ſets me thinking more ſeriouſly than the ordinary buſineſs you have been juſt diſcharging. Aye," ſaid Bragwell, "it ſets me thinking too, and ſeriouſly as you ſay, when I obſerve how much the price of wages is increaſed." "Yes, yes, you are ready enough to think of that," ſaid Worthy, "but you ſay not a word of how much the value of your land is increaſed, and that the more you pay, the more you can afford to pay. But the thoughts I ſpoke of are quite of another caſt. When I call in my labourers on a Saturday night to pay them, it often brings to my mind the great and general day of account, when I, and you, and all of us, ſhall be called to our grand and awful reckoning, when we ſhall go to receive

our wages, maſter, and ſervants, farmer and labourer. When I ſee that one of my men has failed of the wages he ſhould have received, becauſe he has been idling at a fair; another has loſt a day by a drinking bout, a third confeſſes that though he had taſk-work, and might have earned ſtill more, yet he has been careleſs and has not his full pay to receive; this, I ſay, ſometimes ſets me on thinking whether I alſo have made the moſt of my time. And when I came to pay even the more diligent who have worked all the week; when I reflect that even theſe have done no more than it was their duty to do, I cannot help ſaying to myſelf, night is come, Saturday night is come. No repentance or diligence on the part of theſe poor men can now make a bad week's work good. This week is gone into eternity. To-morrow is the ſeaſon of reſt; working time is over. My life alſo will ſoon be ſwallowed up in eternity; ſoon the ſpace allotted me for diligence, for labour, will be over. Soon will the grand queſtion be aſked, 'what haſt thou done? Didſt thou uſe thy working days to the end for which they were given?' With ſome ſuch thoughts I

commonly go to bed, and they help to quicken me to a keener diligence for the next week.

Some Account of a Sunday in Mr. Bragwell's Family.

Mr. WORTHY had been for ſo many years uſed to the ſober ways of his own well-ordered family, that he greatly diſliked to paſs a Sunday in any houſe of which religion was not the governing principle. Indeed he commonly ordered his affairs, and regulated his journies with an eye to this object. "To paſs a Sunday with an irreligious family," ſaid he, "is always unpleaſant, often unſafe. I ſeldom find I can do them any good, and they may perhaps do me ſome harm. At leaſt I am giving a ſanction to their manner of paſſing it, if I paſs it in the ſame manner. If I reprove them, I ſubject myſelf to the charge of ſingularity, and of being righteous over much; if I do *not* reprove them, I confirm and ſtrengthen them in evil. And whether I reprove them or not, I certainly partake of their guilt if I ſpend it as they do."

TO BE CONTINUED.